

Michigan NETStalk

Michigan Network of Employers For Traffic Safety

Editor: Dan Vartanian

Telephone: (517) 333-5322, Fax: (517) 333-5756, E-Mail: vartanid@state.mi.us

Internet web page: <http://www.trafficsafety.org/states/MI/default.htm>

Summer 2000

NETS Advisory Council members • Detroit Edison • Traffic Safety Association of Michigan
United Parcel Service • Pharmacia & Upjohn Inc. • Spartan Stores, Inc. • Cook Institute • General Motors • Kellogg Company

Safe Driving is Good Work

You haven't missed it! The 4th Annual Drive Safely Work Week (DSWW) campaign has been moved from April to September 11-15, 2000. It's the perfect month to have an impact on safety because it follows the three months of summer when commuter traffic is typically lighter. Once school starts and people return from vacations, anyone who commutes knows the roadway environment changes dramatically. Throughout DSWW, five major traffic safety issues are addressed focusing on a different theme for each day of the week: safety belts; road rage and aggressive driving; sharing the road safely with trucks; impaired driving, and driver inattention.

A limited number of campaign kits will be available at no cost!

To make it easy for you to implement a well organized campaign, NETS has designed a kit that focuses on a theme for each day of the week. Campaign 2000 kits are completely new with revised and updated materials to give you everything you need to launch a successful campaign. We've taken extra steps to provide greater detail on implementing activities throughout the week. The kit includes individual fact sheets, a "road map" complete with ideas and step-by-step instructions to implement meaningful activities, sample newsletter articles for your company publications, campaign poster to display at your place of business, a catalogue of products that support

safe driving activities, camera-ready logo artwork and much more.

Clearly, the stakes in "Drive Safely Work Week"

are extremely high. The week is designed to help companies save resources and, even more important, the lives of their employees, by significantly lowering the number of traffic crashes. *We encourage you to support this initiative by accepting the challenge to reduce traffic crashes involving your employees.*

Michigan NETS is underwriting the cost of a limited number of PR kits and is making them available to you **at no cost** as a Michigan NETS member.

If you have not already ordered a kit through the recent special mailing and still desire one, please immediately contact Michigan NETS Coordinator, Dan Vartanian and order your kit today. Dan can be reached by e-mail at: vartanid@state.mi.us or call (517) 333-5322. Because there are a limited number of free kits available, please act as soon as possible. Once the kits are exhausted, a fee of \$25.00 plus mailing and handling is required.



Safety belt use climbs to record high 83.5% following new law

Safety belt use in Michigan reached a record 83.5 percent after the new standard enforcement law took effect. A special observation survey, conducted by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, documented the dramatic increase in safety belt use.

"This information reinforces the experience of other states—that a change in the safety belt law changes behavior," said Betty J. Mercer, division director of the Office of Highway Safety Planning. "Our work will be to continue these high levels of safety belt use for



the years to come and to document the lives saved and injuries prevented."

Michigan launched a massive public information campaign to promote the new law, utilizing radio and television public service announcements, billboards and special messages at service stations. Special efforts were made to target low belt use groups, particularly young men and drivers in the Wayne County area.

continued on page 2



NEWS

YOU CAN USE

A new truck driver safety video/training module

has been created by Operation Lifesaver (OL) and the American Trucking Associations (ATA). *Your License or Your Life* is intended to prevent catastrophes at high-way-rail grade crossings.

The video includes ways to avoid five critical and common driving situations at grade crossings. OL president Gerri Hall said: "This training program stresses prevention by providing drivers with a step-by-step plan for safety before, during, and after they cross the tracks."

About 25 percent of all highway-rail grade crossing collisions involve trucks, and this video is an important tool for increasing safety among commercial drivers, according to Federal Railroad administrator Jolene Molitoris.

"It will help us to reach our goal of zero tolerance for incidents, fatalities, and injuries at highway-rail crossings. This is such an important video; it is all about saving lives," Molitoris said. For more information, contact Operation Lifesaver, (800) 537-6224; web site www.oli.org

More News you can use:

Did you know that in 1999 there were 415,675 reported crashes in Michigan of which 1,249 were fatal and 124,601 were personal injury?

Did you know that in 1999 there were 1,386 persons killed as a result of the 1,249 fatal crashes?

Did you know that motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among persons living in Michigan 1 to 24 years old?

Did you know that in 1998 the estimated economic loss due to traffic crashes was \$9.6 billion? This translated into a loss of almost \$1,000 per state resident, if costs were spread across the state's population.

Did you know that most fatal crashes occurred on dry roadways (76.6%) in clear weather conditions (53.3%) and that the majority of all crashes occurred during daylight hours (61.4%)?

Source: Michigan State Police, Criminal Justice Information Center

Safety belt use *continued*

The new survey shows that although belt use has climbed, lower belt use rates continue to be among the same groups, i.e. young men and pickup truck drivers.

"We are encouraged by these initial results, and will continue to work to sustain and increase safety belt use in the state," Mercer added.

A statewide telephone survey, conducted about a month after the new law took effect, showed self-reported safety belt use at 78 percent.

Efforts to promote the law will continue throughout the summer and into the fall. OHSP is working on a plan for continued publicity efforts.

Traffic safety advocates may contact the Michigan Resource Center (MRC) for additional standard enforcement educational materials to promote their summer education efforts. MRC can be reached at (800) 626-4636. If you have materials that contain the old safety belt law information, please discard them. When calling MRC please refer to the following "Click It Or Ticket" materials that are available for promoting the new law:

OHSP-970 "Click it or Ticket" Child Passenger Safety Alert (flier)

OHSP-972 "Click it or Ticket" Child Passenger Safety Law Poster

OHSP-989 "Click it or Ticket" Safety Belt Law Poster

OHSP-990 "Click it or Ticket" Safety Belt Law Card

OHSP-993 "Click it or Ticket" Safety Belt Law card—Wayne County only

OHSP-994 "Click it or Ticket" Safety Belt Law Poster—Wayne County only

5th Annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit a Success!

The fifth Annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit was held April 25–26, 2000 at the Kellogg Conference Center at Michigan State University located in East Lansing, Michigan. The Summit included sessions on future trends in commuting; Ontario's approach to traffic safety; and national experts discussing the impacts of driving while fatigued and drowsy. Over 375 traffic safety professionals from around the state attended this year's summit which also held workshops on child passenger safety, updates in repeat offender laws, psychology of youthful behavior, several traffic engineering topics and the impact of the graduated driver license law.



The success of this year's conference in large part was due to the generous financial and in kind support provided by our corporate partners. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the following businesses:

Platinum sponsors: Ford Motor Company, General Motors Safe Driving Program, and United Parcel Service

Gold sponsors: AAA Michigan, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan, DaimlerChrysler, Michigan Consolidated Gas Company, and Schering-Plough

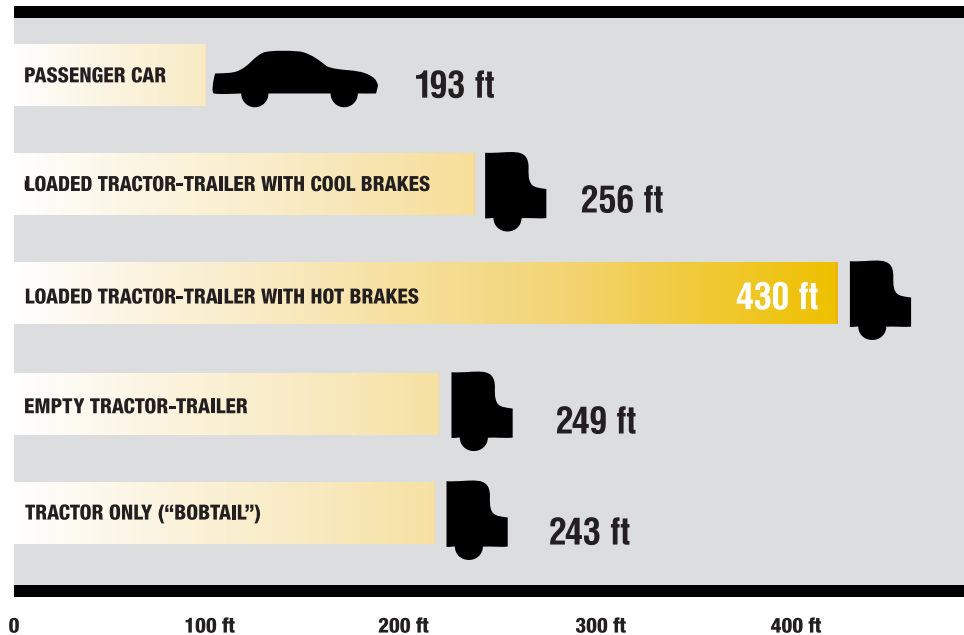
Silver sponsors: American Consulting Engineers Council, Botsford General Hospital, Cadillac Asphalt Paving Company, Central Asphalt, Inc., Corporate Fleet Services, Inc., Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc., John R. Howell, Inc., Michigan Asphalt Paving Association, Inc., Michigan Insurance Federation, National Association of Fleet Administrators-Michigan Chapter, and Traffic Control Corporation

In kind contributions: Boyne USA Resorts, Inc., Brodin Studios, Inc., Century Products Company, Cosco, The Emerald at Maple Creek, Haworth, Inc., Hawk Hollow Golf Course, Kellogg Company, Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, K Mart Corporation, and Two Men and A Truck

Next year's conference promises to be a valuable opportunity to learn more about emerging traffic safety issues, hear about community programs that are making a difference, and share updates on federal, state, and local traffic safety initiatives. The 6th Annual Traffic Safety Summit will take place May 15-16, 2001 at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE?

Average Total Stopping Distance at 55 mph*



*Distances based on a study of average braking distances by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety + (plus) reaction distance recommended by the National Safety Council.

Most motorists understand that a semi-trailer will take more time and distance to brake to a stop than a car traveling at the same speed. But **would you believe** it takes 193 feet, almost two-thirds the length of a football field to stop a passenger car traveling 55 mph. And it takes over twice that amount (430 feet) to stop a tractor-trailer (loaded) with hot brakes.

When motorists fail to understand the physical forces that act on trucks, the resulting confusion can have grave consequences. Using the example of a bobtail's braking distance, our "instincts" tell us that a lightly loaded truck should have less momentum and a shorter stopping distance than one carrying a heavy load—and that a bobtail should stop fastest of all. That may be why the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety study showed that the fatal-accident rate for bobtails was more than 13 times higher than that for tractors pulling trailers. The absence of trailer weight on the tractor's two rear-powered axles drastically reduces tire-to-pavement contact and interferes with the driver's control of the vehicle.

In its defensive driving course for the professional truck driver, the

National Safety Council (NSC) notes that braking distances are increased by two additional factors most people are unaware of: reaction time and brake lag. Reaction time is the number of seconds it takes a driver to recognize a problem and take the appropriate action. The NSC says the average reaction time of most people is three-quarters of a second.

Brake lag, the period of time between the application of the foot valve and the time the brakes react to maximum brake efficiency, is generally unique to trucks. The hydraulic brakes on automobiles and smaller trucks engage almost immediately. In tractor-trailers, however, the air-brake systems that transmit braking power from the tractor to the trailer are subject to a lag that can add many feet to the stopping distance.

It is very clear that a tractor-trailer of any kind takes far longer to stop than does a passenger car and motorists must take this into account while driving.

Source: Sentry Insurance, Third Edition, "Sharing the Road Media Guide"

ROAD-WISE



NETS
Network Of Employers
For Traffic Safety





State of Michigan
Department of State Police
Office of Highway Safety Planning
4000 Collins Road
P.O. Box 30633
Lansing, MI 48909



Survey Finds Most Motorists Believe Cell Phones Are Major Distraction

A vast majority of adults believe using a cell phone while driving impairs a person's ability to drive, according to a new survey by the Farmers Insurance Group. Eighty-seven percent of respondents held this view. Only 2 percent of drivers said they had been in a crash in which one of the drivers was using a cell phone, but more than 40 percent reported to have had "close calls or near misses" with a driver who was on the phone.

According to company official Kenneth Adams, "While Farmers Insurance promotes the idea of drivers carrying a cell phone in their car in case of emergencies, we don't recommend people use a phone while they are driving." (Driving requires full attention in order to react quickly to changing conditions.)

The insurance group has compiled several tips for drivers who use cell phones:

- If possible, use a hands-free device such as an earpiece or cradle
- Don't take notes or look up numbers while driving
- Place calls when you are not moving or before pulling into traffic

- Keep conversations short; don't use the phone for social visiting while you drive
- Suspend the call in heavy traffic, hazardous weather, or stressful conditions



"If you need to use your phone while you are in your vehicle, we ask that you pull off the road to use it," Adams cautioned. "You still have the convenience of making calls from your vehicle. You're endangering yourself but other motorists too by using the phone in traffic."

For more information, call Adams, Farmers Insurance Group, (323) 932-3016.

TALKING on the phone while driving?
You better keep this NUMBER handy:
911.

Pay attention. Don't be distracted.
Safe driving is a full-time job.

